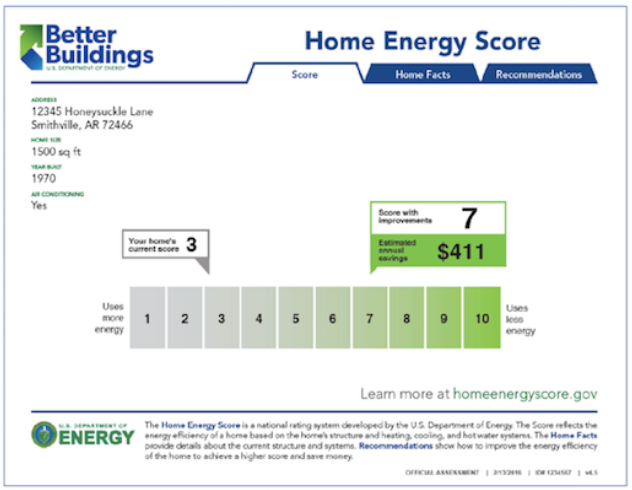
What Does My Score Mean?

HOME ENERGY SCORE

Understanding Your Home Energy Score

After receiving your Home Energy Score, you may have some questions about what it means and how to improve your score. While your Home Energy Score Assessor will know the most about your score and your home, the information provided here will help you learn more about the Home Energy Score in general.

Your Home Energy Score report is comprised of three parts: the Score itself, facts about your home and its energy use, and recommendations to improve your home's score.



The Score Itself

The Home Energy Score uses a 1 through 10 scale where a 10 represents the most energy efficient homes. The scale is determined using U.S. Census housing data, and is adjusted for local climate. This way houses all over the country in different climates can be compared.

Things to remember about your Score:

- **It estimates a home's total energy use, *not* energy use per square foot.**

  For this reason, if two homes are identical other than size, the larger home will generally score worse than the smaller home. The more volume a home has to heat or cool, the more energy is required.

- **Scoring a "1" does not mean your home is poorly built.**

  A beautiful home with up-to-date equipment can still get a low score if the square footage is high or if there is insufficient insulation. A low score just means there is significant room for improvement to reduce a home's energy use.

- **Scoring a "10" does not mean your home cannot improve.**

  Even a home that uses less energy than most of its peers may benefit from additional energy efficiency or renewable energy investments. If recommendations are provided with your Score, consider if those cost-effective measures make sense for your home.

Home Facts

The Home Facts section gives you all of the data the Assessor collected to calculate your Home Energy Score. In addition to providing facts about the building "envelope" (roof, foundation, walls, insulation, windows), energy systems (heating, cooling, hot water), and floor area, this section also provides energy use estimates for the home.

Recommendations

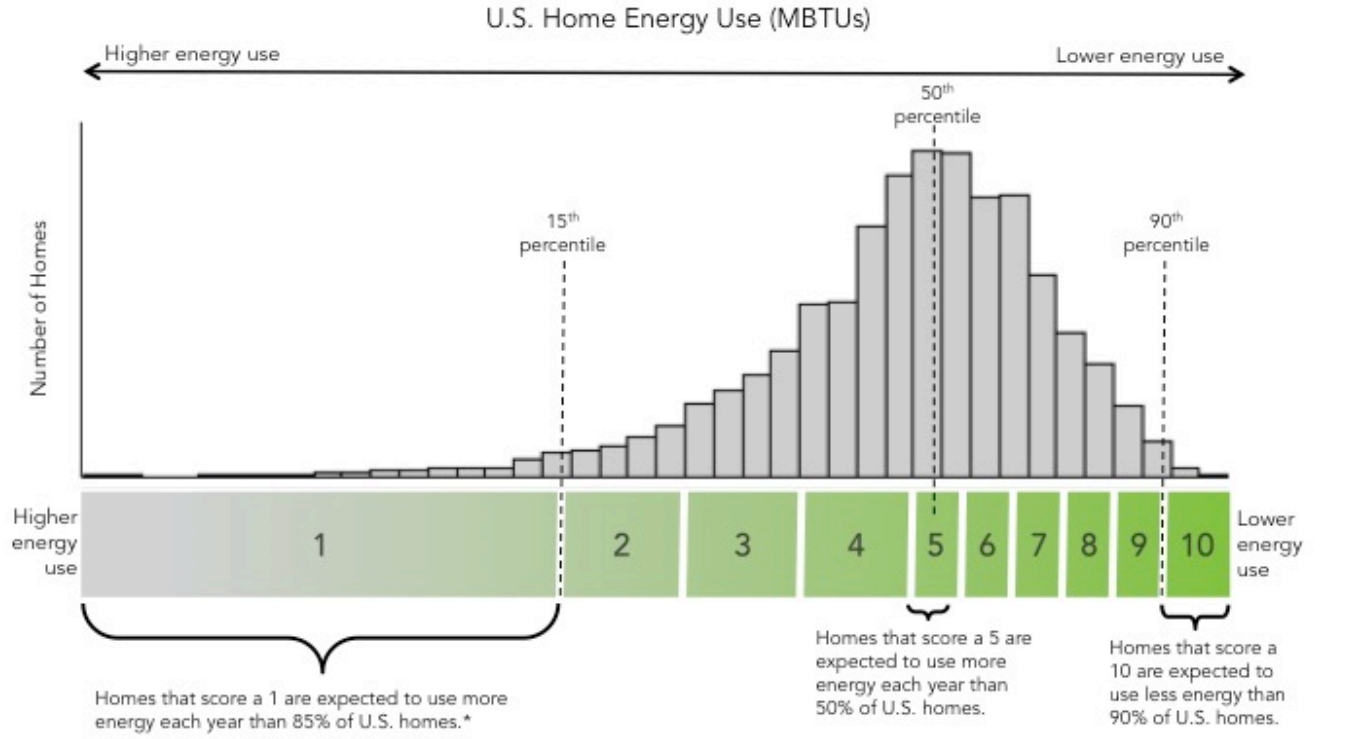
Recommendations that come with the Score are expected to pay back in ten years or less based on state average utility rates and national average installation rates. Assessors may provide different or additional recommendations that reflect local rebates or other incentives the Scoring Tool does not consider.

The "**Score with Improvements**" shows what your house would score if you incorporated all of the tool-provided recommendations. Your assessor will have the best sense of which improvements make the most sense for your home and your area.

Share the Score When Selling Your Home

Increasingly, Home Energy Scores are being included in the real estate market. If you are selling your home, ask your real estate agent to see if your home's score can be listed on local multiple listing services (MLSs). And when buying a home, be sure to ask for each home's Home Energy Score to make a well informed decision.

Converting U.S. Census Home Energy Use Data into the Home Energy Score



*2009 U.S. Census data. Method normalizes for local weather conditions and standard operations assumptions.

Key Features of the Home Energy Score

- An energy efficiency score based on the home's envelope and heating, cooling, and hot water systems
- A total energy use estimate, as well as estimates by fuel type assuming standard operating conditions and occupant behavior
- Recommendations for cost-effective improvements and associated annual cost savings estimates
- "Score with Improvements" reflecting the home's expected score if cost-effective improvements are implemented

Understanding the Score's Method

The graphic above may help you understand how U.S. Census home energy data has helped inform the Home Energy Score scale. The bar graph shows home energy use data for the nation based on U.S. Census surveys, and the Home Energy Score's scale below is stretched to show how homes score based on their energy use.

If your home scores a 5, it is expected to perform comparably to an average home in the U.S. in terms of energy use. If your home scores a 10, it ranks among the ten percent of U.S. homes expected to use the least amount of energy after accounting for climate. A home scoring a 1 is estimated to consume more energy each year than 85 percent of U.S. homes, again after accounting for local climate. To learn more about this data, visit EIA.gov and search "2009 RECS Data".

More Questions?

Talk to your Assessor about what the Score means for your home, or visit our website at www.HomeEnergyScore.gov.